

Academic Disciplinary Procedures 2021-22 (College Bylaw XII Part B)

1. Introduction

From time to time the College has concerns about the academic performance and/or progress of some of its undergraduate students. In such cases it needs to be remembered that continued membership of the College is conditional upon a satisfactory record of work, which includes evidence of diligence and application both in tutorials, and in College and University Examinations. The following procedures will be applied where a student is believed to be lacking the required diligence towards their academic work (details found below) A student who performs significantly less well than expected in a University Examination may be placed on the Academic Disciplinary Procedures, even if they have passed the examination.

A student would normally, in the absence of improvement, progress through the following stages (details found below):

- First Warning: Meeting with College Tutor
- Stage 2: Formal written warning from the Senior Tutor
- Stage 3: Academic probation (may include Special Collections)
- Stage 4: Recommendation for suspension or expulsion

A student may, however, be placed immediately on Stage 2, Stage 3 or Stage 4, depending on the seriousness of the situation. At any time, a tutor may require that a student whose work is causing concern meets the Senior Tutor and/or Provost.

No student can be suspended or expelled for unsatisfactory work by a vote of the Provost and Fellows, other than for failure to meet the College progress rules for University Examinations, unless they have reached or been placed on Stage 4 of the Academic Disciplinary Procedures.

Information about the Academic Disciplinary procedures can be sought from Tutors, the Senior Tutor or the Academic Registrar. Students who find themselves in the final stages of Academic Disciplinary Procedures i.e. facing expulsion or suspension, may seek advice and support from their elected JCR Representatives, Tutors or OUSU.

Note: Some levels of conduct are monitored by the University. Please refer to the Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum for details.

2. Academic Standards

The College expects a certain level of academic standing for all undergraduates, which includes: attending all tutorials/classes with all work fully prepared and submitted on time (unless there is a significant reason for absence, for which the Tutor must be notified as soon as possible); and producing work at a standard of work which is in line with a student's capabilities, for which tutorial/class work and college/University exams will be monitored. In addition, there is a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism in College as in the University (see section on plagiarism below) and the College has rules on student progression after Public Examinations (see rules below).

The University also has requirements on residency which can be found in the Examination Regulations:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/exams/regs/>

3. Feedback

Performance feedback is provided to students via the following means: tutorial discussions; marks and comments on tutorial work and college collections; marks from University examinations; meetings at the end of term with tutors; termly academic reports; and Provost's collections.

In turn, students can provide feedback on academic provision by tutorial feedback questionnaires or direct complaints to the Senior Tutor, unless the complaint is about the Senior Tutor, for which complaints can be raised with the Provost.

4. Support

If a student is experiencing difficulties with their academic performance, they can contact a number of people around college (see the College Administration section at the start of the Student Handbook). Students may also seek specialist support outside the College, e.g. University's Counselling Service, College doctors.

5. Academic Disciplinary Stages

First Warning

If a College Tutor has concerns about a student's work, they will write to the student communicating these concerns, or will arrange a meeting to discuss the situation. Tutors are not required to report First Warnings to Tutorial Committee, but the Senior Tutor should receive copies of relevant correspondence. A First Warning will last for two terms.

After two terms (or before if necessary), the College Tutor will review the student's progress in consultation with other Fellows/Lecturers/Outside Tutors as appropriate. The College Tutor may recommend to the Senior Tutor that:

1. No further action is required.
2. The student should be moved to Stage 2.
3. The student should be moved to Stage 3.
4. The student should be moved to Stage 4 (only in exceptional circumstances).

Stage 2 – Formal Written Warning

If the College Tutor has recommended to the Senior Tutor that the student be placed on Stage 2, the Senior Tutor will decide whether or not to accept the recommendation. If the Senior Tutor decides to accept the recommendation, the student will be called to a meeting with the College Tutor, which may be attended by other Tutorial Fellows and/or College Lecturers and/or the Senior Tutor. Following the meeting, the Senior Tutor will write a letter to the student stating that they have been placed on Stage 2 and that this constitutes a formal written warning. The letter will set out the conditions that need to be satisfied if the student is to be removed from Stage 2, and the time that will be given to fulfil these conditions (normally 2 – 4 weeks). The decision to place a student on Stage 2 must be reported by the Senior Tutor to the Tutorial Committee at its next meeting.

Should the student disagree with the decision of the Senior Tutor, they may ask a Supplementary College Advisor to mediate.

At the end of this period the College Tutor will review the student's progress in consultation with other Fellows/Lecturers/Outside Tutors as appropriate. The College Tutor may recommend to the Senior Tutor that:

1. The student should be removed from the Disciplinary Procedures.
2. The student should remain on Stage 2 for a further defined period (this may be to allow assessment of progress to be made in Collections)
3. The student should be moved to Stage 3
4. The student should be moved to Stage 4 (only in exceptional circumstances)

Stage 3 - Academic Probation

If the College Tutor has recommended to the Senior Tutor that the student be placed on Stage 3, the Senior Tutor will decide whether or not to accept the recommendation. If the Senior Tutor decides to accept the recommendation, they will write a letter to the student setting out the conditions of Academic Probation and the time within which certain conditions must be fulfilled. This period must be long enough to give the student a reasonable opportunity to fulfil the conditions, and will be decided by the Senior Tutor, on the recommendation of the College Tutor.

The decision to place a student on Stage 3 must be reported by the Senior Tutor to the Tutorial Committee at its next meeting. Should the student disagree with the decision of the Senior Tutor, they may ask a Supplementary College Advisor to mediate.

The conditions of the Probationary Period will normally include achievement of target marks in Special Collections. The nature of the collections and the target mark(s) will be decided by the subject tutors. The student will be given reasonable notice of Special Collections (normally at least four weeks, which could include time during a vacation). Special Collections will be marked by two people, at least one of whom will be external to the College. Where Special Collections are to be sat during a vacation, they must be sat at least two weeks before the commencement of term; they must then be marked before the commencement of term. At the time that Special Collections are agreed, the Senior Tutor will inform the Vice-Provost, who will select the membership of the Academic Disciplinary Sub-Panel (see below).

At the end of the probationary period, and when Collection marks are available, the Senior Tutor will decide, in consultation with the College Tutor and other Fellows or Lecturers as appropriate, whether the conditions have been satisfied, and which course of action to take. In the event of failure to satisfy the conditions of the probationary period, the Senior Tutor may wish to take extenuating circumstances (including but not limited to illness or personal problems) into consideration when considering which course of action to take. Such extenuating circumstances will only normally be taken into consideration if they have been communicated to the Senior Tutor by the student or a Fellow of the College acting on behalf of the student before the end of the relevant Examination (i.e. before the end of the final paper). Only in the most exceptional circumstances will information be considered if it is not communicated to the College until after the Examination has ended.

1. If the conditions have been satisfied the Senior Tutor may decide that:
 - a. The student should be returned to Stage 2, OR
 - b. The student should be removed from the Academic Disciplinary Procedures.
2. If the conditions have not been satisfied, the Senior Tutor may decide that:
 - a. The student should be placed on Stage 4, OR
 - b. The student should be placed (in exceptional circumstances) on a further period of probation (normally not more than four weeks of term) which may include further Special Collections.

Stage 4 - Recommendation for suspension or expulsion

If the Senior Tutor recommends to the Governing Body that the student should be either suspended or expelled and withdrawn from any impending University Examination, they will write a letter to the student detailing the recommendation being made. The student will be asked whether they wish their case to be heard by the Academic Disciplinary Sub-Panel. If the student elects for their case to be heard, the Senior Tutor will inform the Vice-Provost who will convene the Academic Disciplinary Sub-Panel previously selected. If the student

elects not to be heard by the Sub-Panel, the Provost and Fellows will proceed at once to a decision at the next meeting of the Governing Body.

Academic Disciplinary Panel and Sub-Panel

Note: Students who are asked to appear before a Panel can be accompanied by e.g. a friend or a supporter from OUSU. The subject Tutors or supervisors, the Academic Registrar and the JCR or MCR committee will be able to offer advice.

The Academic Disciplinary Panel consists often Governing Body Fellows, and is selected by the Provost at the start of each academic year. The Vice-Provost selects three members from the panel to form an Academic Disciplinary Sub-Panel which would normally include the Vice-Provost, who would chair the Sub-Panel. Should the Vice-Provost not be a Sub-Panel member, they will appoint a chair.

The Academic Disciplinary Sub-Panel will determine the format of the hearing. The student shall be reminded in writing of the academic reasons that have caused matters to reach this stage, of the possible recommendations open to the Sub-Panel, and of the time and place of the hearing, and shall be provided with a copy of the Academic Disciplinary Procedures. The student will be given the opportunity to appear before the Sub-Panel, and if they wish, may be accompanied or assisted by another person (excluding the Senior Tutor, members of the sub-Panel or one whose academic judgment is necessary to the panel). Any documentary evidence (including any medical evidence) that the student wishes the panel to consider must be submitted to the Senior Tutor at least three days in advance of the hearing. Should medical evidence be submitted, the student must permit the panel to consult the practitioner(s) concerned.

The Academic Sub-Panel will report its recommendations to the Governing Body, which will make the decision as to the appropriate course of action at a meeting, which may be called specially. The student may appear before the Governing Body at this meeting and may be accompanied or assisted by another person (excluding the Senior Tutor, members of the sub-Panel or one whose academic judgment is necessary to the Governing Body). The Governing Body will make the final decision within the College. No member of the Sub-Panel who participated in the original hearing can take part in the decision of the case by the Provost and Fellows, which shall be taken by majority vote.

If the Provost and Fellows wish to consider a more serious penalty than that recommended by the Academic Sub-Panel, they must give the student the opportunity to present their case at a future meeting of the Governing Body, which may be convened specially. As above, the student may appear in person and be accompanied or assisted by another person. Any further documentary evidence that the student wishes the College to consider must be submitted to the Senior Tutor at least three days in advance of the Governing Body meeting. Should further medical evidence be submitted, the student must permit the Governing Body to consult the practitioner(s) concerned.

No Tutor whose academic judgment forms part of the academic grounds of concern, nor the Senior Tutor, nor any Fellow selected by the student as above shall act as a member of the Sub-Panel, nor take part in the decision of the case by the Provost and Fellows.

Appeals

Should a student disagree with the decision of the Governing Body, they may appeal to the Conference of Colleges Appeals Tribunal (CCAT). Further details of CCAT are available online: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/colleges/confcol>

Students may also appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>, but only when all College and University appeals procedures have been exhausted.

The student will be notified of their rights with regard to appeal at the appropriate time.

6. Plagiarism

Junior Members must never in any circumstances submit to their tutors work which wholly or partially reproduces the work of another student or which reproduces without acknowledgement material derived from published sources or from the internet. If it is suspected that a student has committed an act of plagiarism, they will be asked whether or not they admit responsibility. Following the student's declaration, the Senior Tutor, in consultation with Fellows and/or College Lecturers and/or Outside Tutors as appropriate, will make a judgment as to whether or not the student committed an act of plagiarism, and will decide on the appropriate course of action. The student will normally be required to rewrite and resubmit the offending piece of work within a specified time limit. In addition, the student will normally be placed on Academic Disciplinary Procedures as described above, according to the severity of the plagiarism. Any Junior Member who collaborates in an act of plagiarism or cheating will also be subject to severe penalties.

What forms can plagiarism take?

- Verbatim quotation of other people's intellectual work without clear acknowledgement. Quotations must always be identified as such by the use of either quotation marks or indentation, with adequate citation. It must always be apparent to the reader which parts are your own independent work and where you have drawn on someone else's ideas and language.
- Paraphrasing the work of others by altering a few words and changing their order, or by closely following the structure of their argument, is plagiarism because you are deriving your words and ideas from their work without giving due acknowledgement. Even if you include a reference to the original author in your own text you are still creating a misleading impression that the paraphrased wording is entirely your own. It is better to write a brief summary of the author's overall argument in your own words than to paraphrase particular sections of his or her writing. This will ensure you have a genuine grasp of the argument and will avoid the difficulty of paraphrasing without plagiarising. You must also properly attribute all material you derive from lectures.
- Cutting and pasting from the Internet. Information derived from the Internet must be adequately referenced and included in the bibliography. It is important to evaluate carefully all material found on the Internet, as it is less likely to have been through the same process of scholarly peer review as published sources.
- Collusion. This can involve unauthorised collaboration between students, failure to attribute assistance received, or failure to follow precisely regulations on group work projects. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are entirely clear about the extent of collaboration permitted, and which parts of the work must be your own.
- Inaccurate citation. It is important to cite correctly, according to the conventions of your discipline. Additionally, you should not include anything in a footnote or bibliography that you have not actually consulted. If you cannot gain access to a primary source you must make it clear in your citation that your knowledge of the work has been derived from a secondary text (e.g. Bradshaw, D. Title of book, discussed in Wilson, E., Title of book (London, 2004), p. 189).
- Failure to acknowledge. You must clearly acknowledge all assistance which has contributed to the production of your work, such as advice from fellow students, laboratory technicians, and other external sources. This need not apply to the assistance provided by your tutor or supervisor, nor to ordinary proofreading, but

it is necessary to acknowledge other guidance which leads to substantive changes of content or approach.

- Professional agencies. You should neither make use of professional agencies in the production of your work nor submit material which has been written for you. It is vital to your intellectual training and development that you should undertake the research process unaided.
- Autoplagiarism. You must not submit work for assessment which you have already submitted (partially or in full) to fulfil the requirements of another degree course or examination.

Not just printed text!

The necessity to reference applies not only to text, but also to other media, such as computer code, illustrations, graphs etc. It applies equally to published text drawn from books and journals, and to unpublished text, whether from lecture handouts, theses or other students' essays. You must also attribute text or other resources downloaded from web sites.

7. Suspending/Repeating study

An undergraduate student will not be allowed to withdraw from a University Examination, to repeat study, or to suspend study, save in exceptional circumstances (e.g. on the basis of medical reports, belated change of course, or where there is an exceptional need for study over and above that normally required for the particular Final Honour School which they are reading). Students should be aware that Examination Regulations and syllabi change from year to year, and only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. on the basis of medical reports) will the University give permission for a candidate to sit an Examination under 'Old Regulations' or according to a previous syllabus. A student seeking to suspend or repeat study for personal/medical/academic reasons should first consult their College Tutor, then make their request in writing to the Senior Tutor, who will make a recommendation to the Tutorial Committee, which will in turn make a recommendation to the Governing Body.

When a student is suspended, or is granted permission to suspend their studies, the Senior Tutor, in consultation with the College Tutor, will normally set conditions which must be fulfilled by a particular deadline before the student may return into residence, and/or conditions which must be fulfilled by a particular deadline before the student is entered for any impending University Examination(s). (If the Examination Entry date is a long way in advance of the projected start date for the Examination, the student may be withdrawn from the Examination if the conditions are not fulfilled by the deadline).

When a student is suspended solely, or partially, on academic grounds, or is granted permission to suspend their studies on a similar basis, the Senior Tutor may decide, in consultation with the College Tutor, that when the student returns into residence, they will be placed immediately on either Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the College's Academic Disciplinary Procedures.

When the Governing Body has decided to suspend a student, or to agree to a student's request to suspend their studies, the Senior Tutor will write a letter to the student, informing them of the College's decision, and setting out any conditions for returning into residence or for examination entry.

A student whose status is suspended does not have any automatic rights to use College or University facilities, to be provided with tuition, or to live in College accommodation. The College will recommend to the University authorities whether or not the student should be allowed to retain their University Card and/or email account and/or access to University Library/Online facilities.

Further details can be found on WebLearn:

<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/colleges/oriel>

Failure to fulfil conditions for examination entry or return into residence

If a suspended student has been set conditions for returning into residence by a specified date and fails to fulfil those conditions, the Senior Tutor will decide, in consultation with the College Tutor, to take one of the following courses of action:

- a. To set a further deadline by which the conditions must be fulfilled. If the examination entry date is imminent, the student may be entered for the examination and subsequently be withdrawn from the examination if the conditions are not fulfilled by the new deadline.
- b. To allow the student to return into residence but to place them on either Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the Academic Disciplinary Procedures.
- c. To recommend to the Governing Body either a) that the student is suspended for a further period of time (bearing in mind the University's 'overstanding for honours' regulation) or b) that the student be expelled, in which event, Stage 4 of the Academic Disciplinary Procedure will be followed.
- d. To allow the student to return into residence and/or be entered for the impending University Examination(s). This would only occur in exceptional circumstances.
- e. To allow the student to request a further period of suspension of status. If this request is agreed, the student will normally be set conditions for returning into residence, which may be the original conditions or may be modified according to changed circumstances. At this point the student will normally be warned that if they should fail to fulfil the conditions, the College will be unlikely to agree to a further period of suspension.

8. College progress rules for University Examinations

The College progress rules referred to in section 1 above are as follows:

- 1) The College will normally terminate the course of a student who fails their First Public Examination at the second attempt.
- 2) Students who fail or who do not obtain Honours in any part of any Final Honours School (e.g. Part A of a two-part FHS) will not normally be permitted to progress.
- 3) In the event of failure to comply with the rules in paragraphs (1) to (2) above, the College may wish to take extenuating circumstances including but not limited to illness or personal problems into consideration when applying the rule. Such extenuating circumstances will only normally be taken into consideration if they have been communicated to the College by the student or a Fellow of the College acting on behalf of the student before the end of the Examination (i.e. before the end of the final paper). Only in the most exceptional circumstances will information be considered if it is not communicated to the College until after the Examination has ended.
- 4) Special Requirements for Some Science Subjects:
 - a. Biochemistry: Continuation to Part II, having completed Part I, will normally be conditional on the student (i) being in good standing as regards motivation and industry, and (ii) having completed in full the practical project and course work requirements of the course.
 - b. Chemistry: Continuation to Part II, having completed Part I, will normally be conditional on the student (i) being in good standing as regards motivation and industry, and (ii) having completed in full the practical project and course work requirements of the course.

- c. Engineering: Continuation to Part II, having completed Part I, will normally be conditional upon the candidate's having satisfied the University requirements specified in the Examination Decrees.
- d. Mathematics, Computer Science and Maths/Comp Sci: Undergraduates reading for the four-year course will be permitted to proceed to Part C following completion of Part B if, in the opinion of the College and their tutors, their academic ability and commitment to their work indicates that their education will benefit from a fourth year reading the subject(s). Otherwise they will be required to accept classification after the Part B examination.
- e. Physics: Continuation to Part B of the 4-year M.Phys. Degree will normally be conditional upon the student having achieved marks equivalent to a 2.1 or better in the Part A examination. Students who fail to reach that standard will normally be required to proceed to Part B of the 3-year BA Degree.

5) Academic support over the long vacation will only be provided where the failure at the first attempt at the First Public Examination can be attributed to exceptional circumstances. Tutors will provide whatever support they feel is appropriate in those circumstances, and this may include:

- Discussing with the student the reasons for their failure and establishing whether re-sits in September are a viable option.
- Ensuring that the student is aware of their responsibility to check examination arrangements (e.g. timetables) themselves.
- Marking past papers by post.
- Revision sessions.

9. Suspension or Expulsion from the University

When a student is suspended by the University authorities, their student status at the College is automatically suspended until reinstated by the University. When a student is expelled from the University, they are automatically expelled by the College.

10. Students with Medical or Personal Problems

If it is apparent that a student is suffering from a medical condition or personal problem which is affecting their academic work adversely over an extended period of time (i.e. several weeks), the student's College Tutor(s) will consult the College's Welfare team. This will normally happen before the student is placed on one of the Academic Disciplinary Stages.

- a. If the problem is medical, the student will usually be asked to consult one of the College Doctors, and to give permission for the College Doctor to release information to the relevant members of staff at the College. The student will normally be asked to agree a treatment plan with the College Doctor. If the student does not co-operate with this plan, the College Tutor(s) and Senior Tutor will normally proceed to follow the Academic Disciplinary Procedures as they would in the case of a student who did not have a medical problem.
- b. If the problem is partly one of a personal nature, the Welfare team, the College Tutor(s) and the student will agree a plan of action which will help the student to complete their academic work satisfactorily. If the student does not co-operate with this plan, the College Tutors and Senior Tutor will normally proceed to follow the Academic Disciplinary Procedures as they would in the case of a student who did not have a personal problem.

If the student is co-operative about following either a medical or welfare plan but they are still unable to work at a satisfactory level, then the following procedure will normally be followed:

- a. The College Tutor(s), the Senior Tutor and the Welfare team will agree adjustments to enable the student to work satisfactorily. Adjustments may include study skills tuition, repeat study, or a request to the Proctors for special examination methods or arrangements. The College Doctors and University Disability Advisory Service may be consulted as appropriate during this process.
- b. The student may be advised to suspend their student status voluntarily for a fixed period of time. If there are medical reasons for the suspension, the student will normally be required to name a doctor with whom they will agree a treatment plan and must provide a letter from one of the College Doctors to certify that they are fit to return into residence before their due date of return. The student may also be set academic and/or other conditions to be fulfilled before they are allowed to return into residence.
- c. If a student is set conditions for returning into residence but fails to meet them by the specified deadline, the procedure given in section 4 ('Failure to fulfil conditions for examination entry or return into residence') will normally be followed.

11. Fitness to Study Policy

Oriel has a framework, based on that of the University, for cases where questions arise as to whether a student is fit to study, or to return to study after a period of leave on account of medical, psychological, or emotional problems.

Oriel's definition of Fitness to Study reflects that of the University. This is found in section 4 of the Proctors' and Assessors' Handbook: <https://www.proctors.ox.ac.uk/handbook/> and currently reads:

'Fitness to Study' means an undergraduate or graduate student's fitness:

- *to commence a distinct course of academic study, or*
- *to continue with his/her current course of academic study, or*
- *to return to his/her current or another course of academic study*

and his/her ability to meet:

- *the reasonable academic requirements of the course or programme, and the reasonable social and behavioural requirements of a student member (whether resident in college or elsewhere) without his or her physical, mental, emotional or psychological health or state having an unacceptably deleterious impact upon the health, safety and/or welfare of the student and/or other students and/or University or college staff (not withstanding adjustments required by law).'*

Most cases will be dealt with by the Senior Dean and/or the Senior Tutor, but there is also a Fitness to Study Panel to which serious and difficult fitness to study cases can be referred if all other normal procedures have been exhausted or are inappropriate. The Fitness to Study Panel shall be selected by the Provost and will consist of members of the Governing Body, but shall not include the Senior Tutor or Senior Dean.

The Provost selects three members from the Panel to form a Fitness to Study Sub-Panel, and would nominate one of these three as the Chair. Members of the Sub-Panel cannot include Subject Tutors of the student concerned, or Fellows selected by the student to accompany them to meetings. The role of the Sub-Panel mirrors that of the University's Fitness to Study Panel. If a student is referred to the Sub-Panel by the Senior Dean and/or Senior Tutor, the Fitness to Study Sub-Panel has power to consider medical and any other appropriate

evidence, to take expert advice (the student may be asked to attend a consultation with a medical or other expert), and to consider submissions made by or on behalf of the student concerned. The Fitness to Study Sub-Panel will determine the format of the proceedings. At the end of the process, the Sub-Panel will decide whether or not the student is fit to study. The Sub-Panel can also make decisions and recommendations about matters like continued access to University and college facilities and premises, with or without conditions. If the student is called to a meeting, the student may bring a friend or supporter.

The Sub-Panel will report its recommendations to the Governing Body, which will make the decision as to the appropriate course of action at a meeting, which may be called specially. No member of the Sub-Panel who participated in the original hearing can take part in the decision of the case by the Provost and Fellows, which shall be taken by majority vote. Any further documentary evidence that the student wishes the College to consider must be submitted to the Senior Dean at least three days in advance of the Governing Body meeting. Should further medical evidence be submitted, the student must permit the Governing Body to consult the practitioner(s) concerned. The College decision should be reached within two weeks of the case being referred to the panel. If the panel's decision is that the student should intermit and the student still disagrees, then the case should be referred to the University's Fitness to Study Panel. There should be a presumption that the student will remain registered and actively studying unless continuing to study is likely to be significantly harmful to their health or there is potential risk to staff or other students if the student continues. If it is necessary to suspend the student pending the outcome of the intermission decision, this should not be seen as pre-judging that decision.